



**NIFA Veterinary Medicine
Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)**

National Institute of Food and Agriculture
US Department of Agriculture
OMB Information Collection
Approval No.: 0524-0046

Veterinarian Shortage Situation Nomination Form

To be completed by the State or Insular Area Animal Health Official

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

Nomination of Veterinarian Shortage Situations for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) Authorized Under the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA)

Note: Please submit one separate nomination form for each position. See solicitation for number of nominations permitted for your state or insular area.

Veterinary Shortage ID Code: PR111

Location of Veterinary Shortage Area for this Nomination

Note: If this nomination is for a public practice position, please provide the location of the home office or the center of service area.

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Location of Veterinary Shortage:

(e.g., County, State/Insular Area)

Center of Service Area or
Location of Position:

University Of Puerto Rico – Mayagüez Campus
Mayagüez, Puerto Rico 00680

(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty

☐ Type I Shortage: Private Practice

Food Animal Medicine (at least 80 percent time)

Please select **one or more** specialties requested for this position:

- ☐ Beef Cattle
- ☐ Dairy Cattle
- ☐ Swine
- ☐ Poultry
- ☐ Small Ruminant
- ☐ Other _____

☐ Type II Shortage: Private Practice – Rural Area

Food Animal Medicine (at least 30 percent time)

Please select **one or more** specialties requested for this position:

- ☐ Beef Cattle
- ☐ Dairy Cattle
- ☐ Swine
- ☐ Poultry
- ☐ Small Ruminant
- ☐ Other : _____

☒ Type III Shortage: Public Practice (at least 49 percent time*)

Employer: University of Puerto Rico Position Title: Veterinarian
Mayaguez

Please select **one or more** specialty/disciplinary areas.

- ☐ Food Safety
- ☐ Public Health
- ☐ Epidemiology
- ☒ Other: Diagnostic Veterinary Pathologist

Please describe the objectives of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation as well as being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

This veterinarian shortage nomination will help to address a need which has been present in the Island of Puerto Rico for more than twenty years. It is expected the nominee will dedicate at least 49% of his or her time to help address the following objectives:

- Aid in the establishment of an AAVLD accredited veterinary diagnostic laboratory
- Aid the State Veterinarians in diagnosing food/farm animal endemic or foreign diseases
- Protect the nation's food supply
- Help monitor diseases of public health significance
- Assist in the surveillance activities of animal diseases in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean
- Help improve the agricultural economy by establishing outreach platforms to educate the agricultural community about food safety, animal welfare and animal health
- Provide local "in-house" postmortem examination of animals by a board certified anatomic pathologist
- Help identify the naturally occurring diseases of food production animals, domestic animal and wildlife populations
- Help identify the foreign animal disease and emerging diseases of food production animals, domestic animal and wildlife populations
- Collaborate in the investigation of animal disease outbreaks of food production animals, domestic animal and wildlife populations
- Serve as a consultant for local veterinarians, state and federal agricultural agencies concerning the following issues:
 - State biosecurity
 - Educating the agricultural community on proper biosecurity protocols

Please describe the activities of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation and being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

The responsibilities of the veterinary diagnostic pathologist in Puerto Rico shall include, but not be limited to providing dependable diagnostic necropsy service for the veterinary community and agricultural sector. The data generated by the studies performed by the veterinary pathologist will aid in disease surveillance and monitoring. The veterinary pathologist could also assist state and federal agencies in the identification and prompt diagnosis of foreign and emerging animal diseases. These particular functions will safeguard the food supply and protect the public against zoonotic diseases. The nominee will ideally be interested in establishing outreach programs to educate the community and additionally help train veterinarians and technical staff in disease recognition and proper sample collection. The nominee is expected to aid in the establishment of biosecurity protocols in farms of Puerto Rico as well as promote biosecurity education in agricultural sector. The veterinary pathologist is expected to collaborate with Department of Agriculture and Department of Natural Resources to improve import and export requirements of Puerto Rico and help avoid the entry or dissemination of infectious diseases. The nominee shall express a particular interest in forming part of and assisting in identifying the endemic diseases of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean.

Please describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian in the shortage situation identified above (limit your response to 100 words or less).

The Puerto Rico State Veterinary Laboratory does not employ a Board Certified Veterinary Pathologist and is actually supervised by a Veterinarian that is not qualified to perform the duties of a Veterinary Pathologist. There have been multiple unsuccessful attempts to recruit and retain a veterinary pathologist in the past. In most instances veterinarians who train in this discipline are recruited in the United States or other countries. The salaries offered to these professionals in Puerto Rico do not compare to those offered in the mainland. Currently, there are no incentives for veterinary pathologists to establish in the island. Designating the funds for this particular shortage situation in Puerto Rico will be an investment well made since we are in dire need of attracting and retaining this sort of professional in the island of Puerto Rico.

Please describe the risk of this veterinarian position not being secured or retained. Include the risk(s) to the production of a safe and wholesome food supply and to animal, human, and environmental health not only in the community but in the region, state/insular area, nation, and/or international community (limit your response to 250 words or less).

Currently in Puerto Rico there is a need to determine the diseases which are affecting the pet, livestock, poultry and wildlife populations of the island. The veterinary pathologist has the expertise in forensics and diagnostics that will contribute with important data regarding the veterinary diseases of the tropics. The repercussions of not retaining and securing a veterinary pathologist in Puerto Rico can be considered an urgent matter since diseases of public health importance may remain undiagnosed. In conjunction with the local veterinary and human health professionals, the veterinary pathologist may collaborate to support animal health and ensure food security and public health. The role of the veterinary pathologist in Puerto Rico is of particular importance since neighboring countries such as the Dominican Republic suffer from high consequence foreign animal diseases such as classical swine fever. The veterinary pathologist may help reduce the delay in recognizing and controlling agroterrorism, new and re-emerging diseases.

Please indicate whether you consider this situation/position a candidate for a "service in emergency" agreement (limit your response to 100 words or less). Please see solicitations for additional information regarding the obligation of participants who enter into the "Service in Emergency" agreement.

The veterinary pathologists will be the ideal candidate for a "service in emergency" agreement due to his or her expertise in disease mechanisms.

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

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|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Name: | Dr. Elton L. Irizarry-Pasarell |
| Title: | Acting SVO |
| Organization: | Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture |
| Email: | eirizarry@asda.gobierno.pr |
| Telephone Number: | 787-840-1565/ 787-8425210 |
| | (Area code required) |

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Elton L. Irizarry-Pasarell DVM | March 11, 2011 |
| Type Name | Date |

Public reporting for OMB control number 0524-0046 is estimated to average two hours, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information, unless it displays a current valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to NIFA, OEP, 800 9th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.